

Japan formally acknowledges, apologizes and accepts full historical responsibility for this crime. To date, they have still not received such a formal apology. That is why I introduced House Resolution 121, which calls on Japan to do so.

I believe the U.S. must have a strong foundation in historical reconciliation. For example, in 1988, Congress passed, and President Ronald Reagan signed into law, H.R. 442, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which was a formal apology to United States citizens of Japanese ancestry who were unjustly put into internment camps during World War II.

As someone who was put into an internment camp as an infant, I know firsthand that we must not be ignorant of the past, and that reconciliation through government actions to admit error are the only ones likely to be long lasting.

Our government made a mistake, but they apologized for it, and healed many wounds as a result. Today, fewer than 300 comfort women are alive and the number is dwindling as they pass away. They want, and deserve, an official apology.

I cannot put into words how grateful I was when H. Res. 121 received overwhelming support in the 110th Congress—first during its markup held under Chairman Tom Lantos' leadership, and then during its debate and final passage before the House on July 30, 2007.

The fact that H. Res. 121 received no opposition during its consideration and passed unanimously attests to its importance and relevance today. By doing so, the House sent a profound message to the government of Japan that the United States takes the issue of the comfort women very seriously.

Immediately after its passage, I rushed to the House gallery, where Yong Soo Lee, a surviving comfort woman, was watching floor proceedings. We shared a tearful embrace, one I will never forget. She repeated "Thank you. . . . thank you. . . .", and I could see in her face that she felt, maybe for the first time in her life, some sense of relief.

Despite the struggles I may have faced in pushing forward this resolution, and the criticism I received from the government of Japan, seeing Yong Soo Lee immediately reminded me again why I chose to tackle this issue.

While the resolution was successful, unfortunately it has not forced the government of Japan to act. The comfort women deserve to have their dignity and honor restored to them. It is not too late for Japan to issue a sincere and official apology, while these women are still alive.

I am hopeful that an international awareness has spread about comfort women, particularly in Australia, the Philippines, and Canada, where comfort women resolutions similar to H. Res. 121 have been introduced and some passed. We must continue to advocate for a formal apology for the comfort women as a matter of fundamental justice. It is an honor to be here in Korea to continue educating about this chapter in history, and to educate others about the importance of an apology for the women.

Moral justice and education have been the two guiding principles I have followed during my fight for the comfort women.

I believe education is a tool that can also be used to fight another battle: global warming. Climate change is the most significant threat

to our environment today and is one of the greatest challenges that humans face. The overwhelming scientific evidence makes clear that global warming is a real phenomenon, and that human activities play a significant role.

Twenty of the hottest years in recorded history occurred since the 1980s. Glaciers and permafrost are vanishing. Weather patterns are shifting. Migration patterns are being disrupted.

Global warming presents mankind with a new kind of problem. To fight global warming, dramatic changes will be needed in transportation, energy production, public policy, and human behavior world wide.

As a former teacher, I feel education will be essential to allowing those changes to happen, which is why I introduced the Global Warming Education Act, H.R. 1926. The bill will broaden America's understanding of human-induced global warming, short and long term consequences, and potential solutions.

Widespread understanding of this phenomenon will play a significant role in our ability to address a crisis that tangibly and immediately impacts every single human being. It is vital that people of all walks of life possess sufficient understanding of the issue so that each and every one of us may play a role in defending the health of our planet.

I learned that Korea is becoming a world example and leader of using "green" technology to also address these threats. The U.S. is also an active leader in this effort, and this is just one example of many of the common values that our two countries share. I commend you for leading on the green technology front, and encourage you to educate your peers about the threats that we as humans face.

In closing, Korea holds a very special place in my heart. The relationship our two countries share is vitally important and continues to grow. I have many close friends here in Korea, and I appreciate the welcoming spirit of the Korean people each time I visit. Receiving this honorary doctorate is a lifelong dream of mine, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be presented with such an honor.

Again, I would like to thank the President, faculty, and the students of Kangwon National University for bestowing this honor upon me.

KOREA'S MESSAGE OF SUPPORT
FROM MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS AND TRADE YU,
MYUNG-HWAN TO THE PEOPLE
OF AMERICAN SAMOA IN
AFTERMATH OF DEVASTATING
TSUNAMI

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 13, 2009

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I submit the following message of support from Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Yu, Myung-hwan of the Republic of Korea in response to the massive tsunami that struck American Samoa on Tuesday, September 29, 2009.

EMBASSY OF THE
REPUBLIC OF KOREA,

Washington, DC, October 5, 2009.

Hon. ENI FALEOMAVAEGA,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific,
and the Global Environment, U.S. House
Committee on Foreign Affairs.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: It was with deep grief that I learned of the heavy loss of life and the disastrous property damages caused by the tsunami that swept your hometown, and would like to express my most profound sympathy and condolences to you and the people in the American Samoa, particularly to those who have lost their loved ones.

I earnestly hope for speedy relief and rehabilitation under your leadership.

Sincerely yours,

YU, MYUNG-HWAN,
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

JAPAN'S MESSAGE OF SUPPORT
OF THE PEOPLE OF AMERICAN
SAMOA IN AFTERMATH OF DEV-
ASTATING TSUNAMI

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 13, 2009

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I submit the following message of support from Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki of Japan in response to the massive tsunami that struck American Samoa on Tuesday, September 29, 2009.

EMBASSY OF JAPAN,

Washington, DC, September 30, 2009.

Hon. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE FALEOMAVAEGA: It is with great sadness that I learned of the tragic loss of life in American Samoa due to yesterday's earthquake and tsunami. My condolences go out to the families and friends who have lost loved ones, and I pray for the speedy recovery of those who were injured as well as the communities that have suffered much damage.

The people of American Samoa have our heartfelt sympathies as they rebuild their homes and communities.

Sincerely,

ICHIRO FUJISAKI,
Ambassador of Japan.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE NANCY
PELOSI'S MESSAGE OF SUPPORT
TO THE PEOPLE OF AMERICAN
SAMOA IN AFTERMATH OF DEV-
ASTATING TSUNAMI

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 13, 2009

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I submit the following message of support from Speaker of the House NANCY PELOSI in response to the massive tsunami that struck American Samoa on Tuesday, September 29, 2009.

The thoughts of the entire Congress are with the people of American Samoa as they grapple with the terrible loss of life as a result of today's tsunami. As the island works to rebuild, all levels of the government, including Congress, will move quickly to address the needs of American Samoa and the Americans who live there.